



City of Hamilton

223 South Second Street
Hamilton, MT 59840

February 29, 2008

RECEIVED *Copied to Karen*
MAR 12 2008 *Planning*

Ravalli County Commissioners
215 S. 4th Street, Suite A
Hamilton, MT 59840

Ravalli County Commissioners

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Dear County Commissioners,

The City of Hamilton has shown great leadership in setting high standards for how our community grows. We have detailed zoning regulations which include design guidelines for commercial corridors and maximum building sizes for commercial buildings. Our building inspection department issues permits, collects fees and ensures that building codes are enforced. City of Hamilton Public Works Standards define how water, sewer, storm water management facilities, streets, sidewalks and lighting will be developed. Our city has imposed impact fees on new development for water, sewer, police, fire and residential transportation.

All of these tools promote responsible growth in our community. Developers have annexed into the City because in exchange for following our regulations and paying their share of the cost associated with growth, they gain access to municipal water and sewer allowing them to build densely near the city center and end up with highly marketable products.

The City of Hamilton commends the County's decision to proceed with county wide zoning. We realize this is an intense and difficult process. We are encouraged by the cooperation among the elected officials and staff of the City and County. Everyone in Ravalli County, including city residents, who are also county residents and taxpayers, has an investment in how our community grows.

City officials have reviewed the draft zoning regulations and the diagnosis of the draft zoning regulations and offer the following comments for your consideration.

- The City of Hamilton must have the ability to grow within its planning area without having to contend with development that is inconsistent with future City land uses and/or standards. **Our primary concern is to avoid substandard growth around our city.**
- The City recognizes the advantages and efficiencies of urban densities near existing urban centers. The Town Residential single family density of 2-5 units and the Town Residential mixed density of 5-20 units per acre, however, are inappropriately high densities for development in unincorporated areas near Hamilton. These densities are appropriate within the City of Hamilton's jurisdiction. We suggest that if density near urban centers is what the community desires, the County should adopt policies that encourage annexations within the planning area. In situations where annexation is not practical, the county should require that, prior to allowing any new development within

the city planning area, property owners sign a waiver of protest for annexation. This waiver would require that property owners agree to annex into the city and to hook into municipal sewer and water as it becomes available.

- Zoning along commercial corridors outside the city jurisdiction should be extended to complement what the city has already put into place. Existing and planned commercial corridors include Marcus Street/Eastside Highway/Black Lane, Fairgrounds Road, Old Corvallis Road to GSK, HW 93 and West Main Street.
- Incorporating the design guidelines already adopted by the city into county zoning would encourage more attractive commercial corridors.

We thank you for your time and efforts on this project. Please distribute a copy of this letter to Planning Director Karen Hughes and to Clarion Consultants. Please contact either myself at 363-2101 ext.13 or Land Hansen at 363-3316 if you wish to discuss any of the ideas and suggestions outlined in this letter.

Sincerely,



Mayor Randazzo

cc: Hamilton City Council Members